

POEMS

AND

IMAGININGS

BY

CAPT: TEMPLER.

1st GLOUCESTER'S



ÉDITIONS BOSSARD

PARIS

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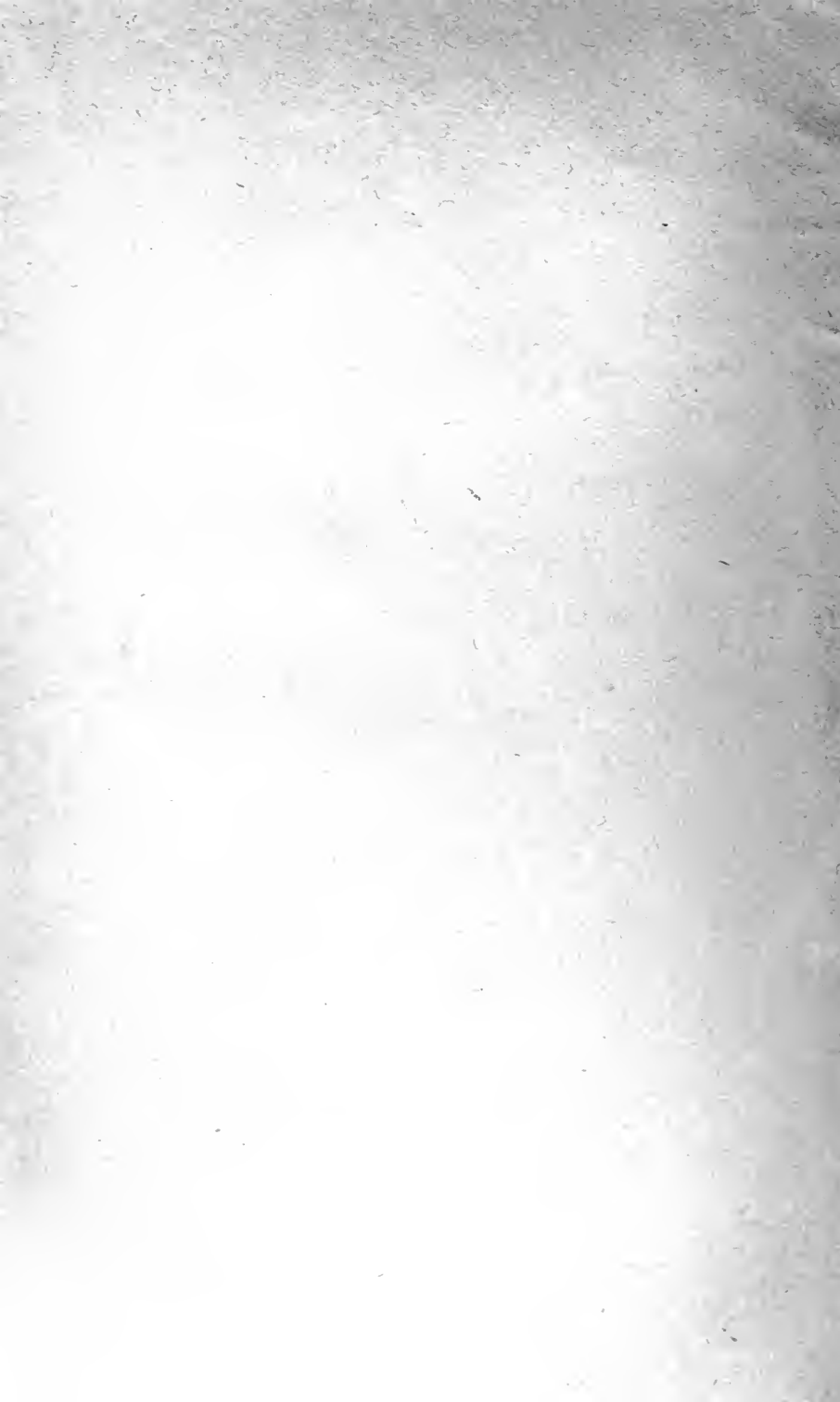
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POEMS
AND
IMAGININGS





Cliché Vizzavona.

CAPT : TEMPLER

From the painting by Mlle Andrée KARPÉLÈS (Salon 1920).

P O E M S
AND
I M A G I N I N G S
BY
CAPT : TEMPLER
1st GLOUCESTER'S



ÉDITIONS BOSSARD
43, RUE MADAME, 43
PARIS
1920

CONTENTS

FRONTISPIECE :

Portrait of Capt : Templer by Mlle Andrée Karpelès.

INTRODUCTION. 5

DEDICATION. 25

Portrait of Capt : Templer by Mlle Lissagaray (*to face page 27.*)

POEMS :

Sorrow's Triumph 29

Madonna Mia 30

The Wheel 32

Puristan. 34

The Losing Fight 35

Dream Lady 36

Moon Girl. 37

Soul Poison. 38

Sorrow 39

Horror 40

Nightfall 41

Dawn 41

Music of Rain 42

Soft Brown Eyes. 43

Trenches of Flanders (Fragment) 44

Ypres Salient 45

ESSAYS :

1. The All Soul 47

2. The Self Soul. 49

SHORT STORIES :

The Zenith (an Image) 53

The Losing Fight 71

Portrait of Capt : Templer (From a Photograph, 1918)
[*to face page 70.*]

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS. 85



INTRODUCTION

AND

ACCOUNT OF ADVENTURES AND ESCAPE

from captivity in Germany

These writings, the work of Claude Templer, during over two and a half years of dreary captivity in Germany, have at last, after many months of anxious searching, been found and returned from the enemy country. Alas, the MSS are sadly incomplete; this collection only representing about one third of the whole.

It has often been remarked that prisoners, as the long hours drag slowly by, find inspiration in dreams of the outer world; for the cruel monotony of their lonely lives can only find relief in the vitality of their intellect. Condemned to long periods of solitary confinement in incredibly small cells, subjected to brutal discipline and half starved in the crowded Lagers : such

were the conditions which fostered the intensity of thought and feeling that found expression in the following pages.

Yet, Claude Templer's spirit was indomitable, unconquerable. Twelve times did he elude the armed guards that watched; twelve times was he recaptured; often after many weary nights and days of lonely wandering. Yet again he tried, and the longed for freedom was gained at last. Less than a year after, he died in France : died that others might enjoy the liberty he had so dearly won.

The story of Capt : Templer's repeated attempts to escape is one of unflinching courage : of courage that endured pain and defied death. The complete narrative furnishes matter for an entire volume but in this Introduction I have only space to record the main facts.

But before proceeding with this account, I would say; that for those worthy "armchair critics" who have been heard to utter derogatory sentiments concerning escaping prisoners of war; I refer them to the Army Act, Section 5, which states that prisoners of war should "rejoin his Majesty's service when able to rejoin the same". And further, I quote from a passage in an official account written by Capt : Templer subsequently to his escape stating that, "in cases where the prisoners have been caught in attempting to escape, the Germans have not made the rest suffer more inconvenience than was necessary as a precautionary measure".

Capt : Templer joined his regiment, the 1st : Bn : of the Gloucesters, on the Western front in Nov : 1914.

On the 22nd Dec : he advanced ahead of his platoon, to reconnoitre a German trench. Proceeding along the trench he came up with an enemy N.C.O. and was on the point of shooting him with his revolver when he was knocked senseless to the ground from behind by a blow on the head with the butt end of a rifle. He was sent back from the lines, a prisoner, to Lille and from there, with a number of other British wounded, he was sent to the prison camp at Hanover-Münden. The journey was made in cattle trucks and he states that " On our arrival at Cologne the doors of the train were opened and a shower of stones was thrown at us ".

On the 7th : of April 1915, he made his first escape in company with seven Russian officers. This camp (Hanover-Münden) was a converted oil factory. The officers were almost starved and the wounded received practically no medical attention whatever. A certain portion of the building was assigned to the so-called hospital in which Capt : Templer was confined, owing to the extremely bad state of his health. He was still suffering from concussion and slight shrapnel wounds in his legs which had festered owing to neglect and blood-poisoning caused by the disgusting quality of the extremely insufficient food provided. By the help of another wounded officer, he was able to join the party of seven Russians who were piercing a portion of the factory wall which was concealed behind a piano, using for this purpose an ordinary pocket knife. The wall once pierced opened up communication with an air shaft that extended beyond the barbed wire. Through this shaft the party made good their escape

and, for twenty-four hours were not missed by the camp guards. Several other Russian officers, however, made use of the exit contrived by the first party and, consequently, the large number of absent prisoners led to it's discovery. The Germans at once set forth in pursuit, armed to the teeth and accompanied by numerous dogs. The second party was immediately captured. The first party, however, travelled on for six days till they reached the village of Rheine, close to the Dutch frontier, where meeting some peasants who regarded them with suspicion, one of the Russian officers lost his nerve and sbrieked and and ran away. On this the whole party quickly dispersed. Shortly after, Capt : Templer, too fatigued to travel further, concealed himself in a ditch and went to sleep. He was awakened by the villagers to whom the alarm had been given and who had discovered his hiding place. Quickly, he started up and ran. The whole village set out in pursuit. For two miles he ran, weak and exhausted as he was, before they could come up with him. At last one man laid his hand upon his arm, but quick as thought Capt : Templer struck him to his knees with an empty bottle he was carrying. Then, in his own words: "I was nearly lynched but was saved from the people by a policeman who came up. I was taken to Detmold civil gaol. I was taken to the barracks on the way under escort and a man here came out and tried to kick me".

The 15th : of April found him in the Military Prison at Münden. From there a fortnight later he was transferred to Bischofswerda camp and shortly

after to Torgau. At both of these places he made fresh plans to escape which were in each case frustrated by his being removed elsewhere. From Torgau he was moved to Burg camp where he immediately began a tunnel. This proved a failure and in conjunction with Capt: Allistone he began another. This was discovered on the 15th: of Sept: 1915 and the two officers were at once sent to Burg civil gaol, there to await trial. Here, as in all German prisons where British prisoners were confined, the conditions were unspeakably bad. Capt: Templer was sentenced to one year and one week's imprisonment for "damage to public property and the theft of a plank!" This sentence was afterwards commuted to seven months on the 15th: Oct: However, the general in command of the notorious 4th: Army Corps was determined on revenge and on the 9th: Dec: he reassembled the court and rescinded the commuted sentence. In Jan: 1916 a final Court-Martial was held. To quote again his own words: "I was tried by Court-Martial and was given one year for assisting in making a tunnel at Burg in June 1915. Here there was a court of about eight and as I understood German I did not need an interpreter. The court asked me to say what I had done but I refused, when they became furious and started to cross-question me. I made no defence but denied nothing, except that I admitted having helped to make a tunnel with a view to escape. I was given a sentence of six months for damage to public property and an extra month for the theft of a plank. Capt: Allistone and I were asked if we wished to appeal and we said "No" but the General appealed

for us and got our sentence increased to one year and one month."

During his detention in Burg Gaol he made no less than four attempts. The first, by contriving to steal the keys, he, with Capt : Allistone, got clear of the gaol and passed through the town. They were caught on the outskirts and brought back; accompanied by an angry crowd who spat at them and attempted to mob them.

The second time, a Russian officer very cleverly made skeleton keys that opened the door of his own cell and those of several other officers, including Capt : Templer's. At night he unlocked the cell doors and the whole party ascended unseen to a loft where they proceeded to demolish a portion of the roof. Having made a hole sufficiently large to pass through, they attached a rope made of torn sheets to a chimney and the Russian officer started to climb down. The "rope" broke and he was precipitated into a water-butt in the courtyard below. The noise of his fall alarmed the guard, rendering further effort useless.

The third attempt was made by sawing away the iron bars of a cell window.

The fourth consisted in drugging the gaoler, but owing to the inferior quality of the drug, this also proved a failure.

Shortly after this he was transferred to the Magdeburg Civil Gaol which he describes as "the worst prison in Germany" where the cells were "one yard wide by four long and ventilated by a window one foot square". A short period of exercise was allowed in the yard with

the other prisoners and here he helped another officer to escape; the "mystery" of whose sudden disappearance has yet to be cleared up by the German military authorities!

Towards the end of April 1916 Capt : Templer again became seriously ill from the wound in his head and a doctor was called in. A few minutes before his arrival he drugged himself so effectually that when the doctor entered the cell he found him lying in a dead faint across the bed. The doctor recommended his instant removal from the cells at Magdeburg and in consequence of this he was sent to the fortress at Wesel. From this fortress he made another unsuccessful attempt only reaching as far as the moat.

On May 1st : the thirteen months of his sentence being concluded, he was ordered to Magdeburg camp. The journey was made with an armed guard consisting of an N. C. O. and a private. On the way to Magdeburg they were obliged to change trains and to wait for the connection at a certain country station. The N. C. O. left Capt : Templer in charge of the private only, who duly marched his prisoner up and down the platform. During the entire journey, he had been searching for an opportunity to elude his guards and now he took in the situation at a glance. The station was practically deserted save for one or two old men and a few women and children. At one end the platform was bounded by a low brick wall some three feet high; on the opposite side of which an old bicycle was leaning. "Halt! Right turn!" The private turned in the most approved military fashion but his prisoner,

instead of following his example, quickly stepped behind him and, putting his foot in his back, at the same time clutched his throat and pulled him bodily down. Seizing the man's rifle, Capt : Templer threw it as far away as possible and vaulting over the wall, mounted the bicycle and scorched down the road for dear life. A moment later and the N. C. O. came running up. Shot after shot whizzed through the air. Capt : Templer, his head bent low over the handle bars, swayed from side to side of the road till, turning the corner, he left his guards to their impotent rage.

He bicycled on for about fifteen miles, when to avoid detection, he hid the bicycle in some undergrowth and concealed himself in a wood, only a few miles from the Dutch frontier. Here he remained for about twenty-four hours in order to elude the search parties that he knew would be sent out; living the while on what raw vegetables he could pull out of the neighbouring fields. Being in need of sleep, he selected a spot to lay himself down in behind some bushes close to a small clearing. He slept heavily and awoke some hours after to find, to his horror, that a company of German infantry had bivouacked in the clearing. They had but now discovered him and it was the noise of their coarse guttural exclamations that had awoken him.

On his arrest he was taken to Burg camp where he was again tried by court-martial.

The authorities complimented him on his " military method of escape ", at the same time sentencing him to six weeks " very close arrest " in Magdeburg gaol. This " very close arrest " consisted in detention in the

same small cells described above with the additional penalty of "no exercise, no parcels and no smokes". At the termination of this incarceration he was sent to Magdeburg camp where, as usual, he occupied himself in the commencement of a tunnel. At this camp was a certain officer who had carefully prepared a plan of escape for himself and another. He had, for this purpose, cleverly contrived to make a German officer's uniform by dying his own to the usual grey colour, sewing on the red cloth stripes and fabricating tin foil badges. His plan was to pose as escort to a British officer, for it was customary when a prisoner was taken to the dentist, for him to be accompanied by a German officer. This plan was eventually carried out with success, though unfortunately the two Englishmen were subsequently recaptured. Capt : Templer's share in this escape consisted in providing the bogus German officer with the necessary "laisser-passer" which, in conformity with the regulations, had to be shown to the sentry on guard. Now, he observed that a certain German officer was in the habit of keeping his pass in the lower pocket of his tunic; and so he, with one or two others, engaged this officer in conversation and whilst he was speaking Capt : Templer very lightly unbuttoned the pocket and extracted the pass! He then excused himself and left the little group. Hastily he repaired to his room where he photographed the document. He then returned and, finding them still together as had been planned, he again opened the pocket, inserted the pass, quietly buttoned it up and calmly resumed his share of the conversation!

On the 1st of March 1917 Capt : Templer was transferred with all the British officers at Magdeburg to Augustabad. As it was necessary to go through Berlin, the prisoners were marched through the streets of the capital, past the Hindenburg statue, followed by a jeering crowd; echoing the usual " Gott strafe England! " Capt : Templer retorted in fluent German : " You do well to leave that to God for you yourselves can never do it! "

I will quote here a description of the next escape written by a brother officer, namely Capt : Carthew, as this officer helped Capt : Templer in his enterprise.

" At Magdeburg, he and I were going to make an attempt together but we never managed to do so, as we were both moved to Augustabad. At Augustabad, Claude was put in a kind of lodge outside the camp which was used as a prison for officers undergoing arrest, owing to some minor offence against German discipline. He discovered that this was a good place to escape from so he smuggled a note over to me in the camp, by the means of bribing Russian orderlies, and I sent him over civilian clothes and foodstuffs by the same means. A night or two afterwards, he removed the shutters from the window in his room, and was just going to get out of window when he saw a sentry waiting for him with a fixed bayonet, so Claude went back to bed. Of course he was searched thoroughly afterwards, both he and his room, and they took most of the things off him. This lodge was used as a guard room for sentries who were guarding the camp.

“ The next night, Claude put on his civilian clothes and took some food which he had hidden and had not been taken in the search, and about eleven in the evening opened his door and walked through the guard room. The sentries did not see him or were too astonished at his coolness to do anything, and he walked through the door outside and commenced to run. He was seen by a sentry on his beat who fired at him and roused the whole camp. They then all set off in pursuit. But Claude eluded them by hiding behind some bushes at the side of the road while the search party went past him. He walked most of the night and the next day lay up somewhere and went to sleep. The following night he endeavoured to board a goods train and did so... ” This train was heading for Rostock but before entering the station, as the train commenced to slow down, he jumped off the truck. “ In doing so he sprained his ankle. He found, after lying hidden in some bushes for a day or more that he could not walk, so he attracted the attention of some passing peasant who took him to his farm and phoned to the camp commandant who sent an escort to fetch him back. I think this was one of the best of Claude’s attempts for sheer coolness and bravery... ”

On the 1st of May Capt : Templer was sent to the fortress of Cüstrin. It was a practical impossibility to escape from this fortress owing to it’s peculiar position and construction and in consequence of this, prisoners who had made determined attempts were in many cases sent there. Capt : Templer nevertheless began to form plans for an attempt but on the 10th : June 1917

he was sent to the camp at Ströben from which, in company with Capt : Harrison and Lt : Insall V. C. he made his final and successful escape.

To give some idea of the conditions prevailing at Ströben I will quote the following passages from Capt : Templer's account; for the crimes perpetrated by the Germans against prisoners of war, in particular their infamous system of bayoneting defenceless men, cannot be too often brought to the notice of the public, for the murdered and wounded are as yet unavenged.

" Ströben, without exception, was the worst camp I was in in Germany from every point of view. The sanitary arrangements were very bad and the food impossible to eat. The rooms were very much overcrowded. The treatment reminded one of that in 1914. In the prison those who were under close arrest had small dark cells and were allowed no smokes or parcels. The system of punishment there was summary, there was no question of court-martial or appeal. If one was supposed to have committed a crime one was sent off to the cells by the Commandant on the evidence of the sentries or of an Unter-Offizier. For instance, if a prisoner failed to produce his towel at the end of the week or to write his name over the door or to comply with any other regulation, he was sent off to prison for a week. Any prisoner who failed to understand an order given in German or to salute an officer was sent to prison. The guards and Unter-Offiziers were encouraged to be as brutal as possible and prisoners had no means of getting redress. There was absolutely no inducement to run straight. They seemed to be doing their best to

incite a mutiny and the Commandant had orders to keep the prison full.

" There was a waiting list of a hundred. I saw the Senior Officer of the camp do fifteen days imprisonment for having formulated the requests of the other prisoners and handed them in. He was charged with mutiny. About two hundred people went through the prison in a month, out of a total of one hundred and fifty officers in the camp.

" There were four cases of distinct provocation to mutiny which took place inside the camp and in three of these cases officers were bayoneted. In the first case Knight was given an order in German when he first arrived which he did not understand so he was bayoneted in the leg and had to be taken to Hanover Hospital where he remained for two months.

" One day six other officers arrived from another camp and were waiting outside the barbed wire waiting to be led into the camp and the officers inside the camp, about thirty in number, went to the wire to see who they were. The Commandant himself was outside the wire and was heard to give an order telling the sentries to clear these officers away and to use their weapons in doing so. This they did and Downes was bayoneted through the lung from behind and was taken to Hanover Hospital dangerously ill. In the third case about six hundred bottles of bad sherry were sent into the Canteen and was freely drunk by the prisoners. That night sentries were sent in with fixed bayonets, practically challenging resistance. They used to make drives down the camp and one was expected to clear

out of the way. One man was chased on this occasion but he managed to get away and no harm was done...

"The Commandants were changed while I was there, but one was as bad as another and they had evidently been given carte blanche to break the spirit of the prisoners in any way they chose".

On his arrival at Ströben Capt: Templer was again imprisoned for five weeks. On his release on the 17th of July he recommenced planning an escape together with the two officers mentioned above.

The room which served as bathroom was situated above a kind of barn or outhouse. In this room a large number of the officers bathed together whilst, as usual, sentries were placed at the doors. By dint of working every day they managed to scrape, with pocket knives, a tunnel in the floor of this bathroom communicating with the barn beneath; their operations being concealed by the other officers crowding round whilst the work was in progress. The upper planks were replaced each day and so the hole remained unobserved. On the 20th : of Aug : the arrangements were completed and, provided with a supply of food, compasses and a small map, they slipped unnoticed into the barn, the planks being quietly replaced above their heads. In this barn they remained till nightfall. Shortly after they had quitted the bathroom their absence was remarked and the Commandant, coming to the place where they had last been seen, stood practically over the very spot from which the escape had been made; and, furious with rage, gave orders to the guards for immediate pursuit. Little did he think, that as he spluttered out

directions as to the particular places he required the search parties to scour; that Capt : Templer was calmly noting down his indications from the hiding place beneath his feet!

Night came, and with it a violent rainstorm. A sentry on guard outside the camp took shelter in the entrance of the barn. Silently, in stockinged feet, the 'escapers' walked one by one lightly past him, and owing partly to the obscurity and the noise of the rain, the sentinel remained in blissful ignorance.

With the help of the information gleaned from the Commandant, the party was able to elude the patrols that were sent out in various directions, and travelling for nine nights and concealing themselves by day, they eventually approached the Dutch frontier. Once, on the seventh day, they were discovered by a game-keeper, who, although armed with a sporting rifle, was discreet enough to take to his heels! On another occasion, while passing through a field in which were several cows, they caught one and proceeded to milk her. However, they were disturbed in their occupation by a bull, which, being at the other end of the field, had escaped their notice. But now he came thundering, head downwards, across the field in their direction. The three fled precipitately, only clearing the gate in the nick of time!

On the ninth night they reached the river Ems and at midnight swam across it at a point where it was forty yards in breadth. The river crossed, there remained the barbed wire fences to negotiate. These wires were placed above deep ditches filled with water

and occurred every fifty yards for a distance of approximately five hundred yards to a point within an equal distance of the frontier. Cutting through one of these wires caused a bell to ring at a sentry's post. The sentry turned out but failed to detect the three escapers who had taken cover but a few yards off.

The last fence was passed in the small hours of the morning and as the sun rose, disclosing to their view a huge dyke some thirty feet high, they realised that their dream of freedom had become an accomplished fact!

The days of suffering were indeed over. The Commandant at Ströben was no doubt extremely gratified to receive a post-card assuring him of their safe arrival and asking him if he "would be kind enough to forward on their letters to the new address!" But the German is proverbially lacking in a sense of humour and very probably he did not appreciate the joke; any more than the German guards who were so much puzzled when, on a previous occasion, Capt. Templer had sung the 'Hymn of Hate' from beginning to end and was greeted with a roar of laughter and much applause from the other prisoners. It is still remembered how, in those dark days, he would raise the spirits of his fellow captives by singing (for he was gifted with a beautiful voice) the old, familiar "Hearts of Oak" or the "Men of Harlech".

Perhaps only those who have actually experienced the horrors of a German prison camp, can fully realise the daily, endless torture of mind and body systematically inflicted on Allied prisoners of war. To

quote yet once again from Capt : Templer's account :
" In this hospital there were two French soldiers, both badly wounded in the leg; one of these died through neglect as gangrene set in in his leg and they would not take the trouble to operate. We offered money to get him eggs and wine but this was not allowed and he was simply left to die ".

You who read this will perhaps have noted, at the time of writing, the almost daily appearance of a little paragraph in the English papers to the effect that a certain number of British soldiers have " died as prisoners of war". That curt paragraph means that so many men have faced death that came slowly, from neglected wounds and starvation; cut off from help; their very deathbed insulted by their inhuman captors. To prate of 'forgetting and forgiving' now is the sheerest blasphemy. " Teach not thy lips such scorn ".

To return to Capt : Templer and his two companions. On reporting themselves to the Dutch authorities they were yet once again interned; this time in a quarantine camp at Enschede. It was about a fortnight later that, having proved their identity, they were able to start on their journey home. Shortly after their arrival in London they had the honour of an audience of His Majesty the King.

The list of honours awarded to prisoners of war for " Gallantry in escaping" contains Capt : Templer's name as " mentioned in despatches "; the fact of the list appearing some months after his death debarring him, owing to the British Army order concerning posthumous awards, from receiving a specific distinction.

Capt : Templer was untiring in his efforts to obtain permission to rejoin his regiment at the front and on the 29th : of March 1918, having been passed fit for active service, he landed in France.

On the night of the 4th : of June he commanded his company on a raid on the German trenches which he himself had planned and organised. That night, the long years of suffering were avenged.

It was returning to the British lines with his victorious company, that Capt : Templer was struck by a chance shell and instantaneously killed on the field of honour.

Claude Templer was not yet twenty three when he was killed; when he reached the 'Zenith'. For surely the 'Zenith' was reached : in it's completeness. Not only was he an artist in thoughts, in words; but an artist in deeds and his life was crowned by the supreme sacrifice 'for the poetry of an idea' : the sacrifice which every 'gallant knight' must make before the summit is attained.

And you who are journeying on alone, know that, as suffering engenders thought, so is sorrow the birth agony of the soul and joy will surely follow when the soul awakes to life. For even though your eyes are blinded with tears so that the Goal is lost to view; yet shall the day dawn, when you also, fellow traveller, shall reach the 'Zenith'!

Nov : 1919.

T. M.

Capt : Claude Templer... 1st : Gloucestershire Regt :

Born in India : July 5 th : 1895.

Educated at Wellington, Paris and Sandhurst.

Wounded and prisoner : Dec : 22 nd : 1914.

Escaped from Ströhen, Germany : 29 th : Aug : 1917.

Killed in action in France : June 4 th : 1918.







DEDICATION

... Mother,

This book of poems and imaginings is for you.

Because I love you and because I love these my dreams, they shall be as a strong chain that binds us together. And they shall be as a swift messenger to carry thoughts between us. And neither the high mountains which are Desire, nor the deep ocean that is Sin, nor the dark torrent that is Death shall turn the steps of our strong messenger.

Mother... " je t'embrasse de tout mon cœur ".

CLAUDE.









Cliché Vizzavona.

CAPT : TEMPLER

From the drawing by Mlle Lissagaray.

POEMS AND IMAGININGS

WRITTEN IN CAPTIVITY
IN GERMANY

BY

CLAUDE TEMPLER

Captain 1st Gloucestershire Regiment





SORROW'S TRIUMPH

As lips of flowers open' neath the breath
Of the Sun Lover's kiss, so openeth
My heart to thee, Sorrow, thy kisses' neath;
Thy beauty is a flame that withereth.

Thou art the rainbow and the soft snow flakes,
And it is thou sweetest with frenzied fingers
The forest harp chords. 'Tis thy voice that makes
The sweet wild rain song. Ah! My whole soul lingers
On rapture's faery verge. For I can hear the soft
Voices of many angels singing. "Sadness".
They sing; "is queen of Heaven". Ah, how oft
Have I felt thee near me in gath'ring shade;
Felt of thy gloom kisses the scented breath
And loved thee! Sorrow! Sorrow! Thou art made
Of Love flame. And thy beauty withereth.





MADONNA MIA

Madonna Mine ! Love of my dreams come true,
Thy soft brown eyes ere in this life we met,
Looked softly into mine in dreams. We two,
They seemed to say, are lovers. Though as yet
Our paths in this life parted lie, yet we
Are lovers since the day when the twin flame
Of our two souls sprang from the sacred fire
That burns eternally;
Whose breath is life eternal and whose name
Is "Paradise" and "Zenith of Desire".

Madonna Mia ! Whose soft throbbing heart
Is as a lute to mine alone attuned :
Soul of my soul's Nirvana, thou that art
As nectar to my drooping soul that swooned
When first thy soft brown eyes looked into mine.
And after rose a God when first I breathed
Thy heart's love through thy lips. Oh Girl ! That kiss
That first prayer at Love's shrine
When in thine eyes the heaven to me bequeathed
Lay mirrored. Girlie ! We were born for this.

Madonna Mia ! Thou art unto me
As Mary, maiden of celestial love ;
Yet art thou Eve, woman eternally
And Venus, queen ! Oh, God in Heaven above,

Thou that art Power of Love and Power of Prayer,
Help me to raise a shrine within my heart
Where I may worship her for evermore
And love God; grant that ne'er
Spirit of Sin drag our two souls apart.
So shall our watchword be : Vincit Amor !





THE WHEEL

The reason is a wheel. It's radius :
Infinity. It's midmost point of all :
Heaven. Its utmost rim : Hell. As for us,
We whirl within the vortex. We don't fall
Or rise, but outwards drift or inwards strive,
And though to drift is easy, a weird thrall
Enchants, entices everything alive
Towards that mystic midmost point of all.

The reason is a soul. My soul, your soul.
The soul of Paradise, the soul of Hell,
The soul of all creation. And the whole
Is boundless. 'Tis the cause of things as well
As their effect. And wisdom infinite
And love sublime, and bravery supreme,
At the great midmost point of all unite
To form the supreme power that weaves the dream
And breathes the breath, and spins the magic spell.
Here is Joy's Zenith, here is Heaven. Here love,
And they who on the field of honour fell :
They who with dauntless will for wisdom strove :
They who for love's sake suffered shame and pain
Upon the cross, shall after many turns
Of the great life wheel meet. Here once again
Lovers meet. Here the flame of worship burns.

Here Christ and Buddha and Mahomet reap
An equal harvest. Here the burning breath
Of love goes forth to waken those that sleep
In sin's soft arms, goes forth to conquer death.

And they who on the utmost rim of Hell
Drift o'er the sunless seas of sorrow, even
The farthest drifted feel the magic spell :
This is their agony... to dream of Heaven.





PURISTAN

They who, their cartridges spent, cut up, surrounded and beat
Fight back at fate till the end, scorning both death and defeat;
Who, though they know in their hearts that their resistance
[is vain,
Stand to the ground that they hold for that their duty is plain.

Who, at the end when the foe bid them surrender or die,
Die in the pride of their hearts, doing their duty thereby :
They have attained the ideal, their souls climb heaven. Their
[eyes
Pierce thro' the dream to the real; they have attained Paradise.





THE LOSING FIGHT

If Fortune knocks you down and has you beat,
Don't give up hope. Don't strike that Kismet pose.
But keep your head and get up on your feet
For fortune's blows must be returned by blows.

Destiny at the finish of your fight
Awards the irrevocable decree,
And it is only then that you'll be right
In saying, "I must bow to destiny".

Therefore fight on until the closing day,
No matter if your cause be won or lost.
"Tis not defeat or triumph, but the way
In which you've fought your fight that matters most.

Fight on and may it be your joy to see
Dawn pressing hard upon the heels of night;
They only gain the final victory
Who learn the way to fight the losing fight.





DREAM LADY

I loved a girl in dreamland with the love that cannot lie,
With tend'rest truest passion and with deepest ecstasy,
And there was perfect love'twixt us and perfect sympathy.

The wildest longing of my soul, my heart's supreme desire
Found their fulfillment in her love as smould'ring sleeping fire
Fulfillment finds in a raging blaze that mounts for ever higher.

She came from the dream country to this world of misery ;
I saw her in the light of day and knew her instantly
And she loved me and trusted me and gave her heart to me.

Life's joys are swiftly past and sure as Night succeeds To-Day,
So surely He who gives shall deem it fit to take away.
And so my dear Dream Lady died as in my arms she lay.

In dreamworld far and faery my lady's grave I saw.
My dreamland lady's dreamland grave which this inscription
bore :
"Love conquers Death and Faith can pierce the clouds... Excel-
sior !"

All we experience in dreams, all that we see or feel
In mortal life shall pass away... only one thing is real;
The unreached goal of the restless soul which men call' « The
[Ideal".



MOON GIRL

Moon of my heart ! Night falls. And Nature lies
Beneath his kiss in spellbound ecstasy.
Moon of my heart ! I need thee : Lo ! Time flies
And Joy of Life flies with him. Come to me ;
Throw thy soft arms around my neck and press
Thy gentle bosom 'gainst me. In thine eyes,
Thy soft brown eyes so full of tenderness,
Dwell Zenith of Desire and Paradise
Of Passion. Ah ! My Moon, my heart's full moon,
Surely I love thee with the love that ne'er
Shall die, surely I am thy slave. Look ! Soon,
Soon shall all earth be plunged in night save there
Where my Moon shines... Ah ! Moon girl mine ! Lift up,
Lift up thy pouting lips to mine that I
May stoop and drink heart's love from out their cup,
Heart's love, the draught of Immortality.

Moon girl ! Moon girl ! Ne'er am I satiate
Of kissing thee for passion's opiate
Clings on the breath of all thy kisses. Heaven
Holds heavens higher than the seventh... even.





SOUL POISON

Thy mouth is a red poppy that curls up
It's pouting chalice tow' rds me... 'tis a cup
Of Circe's sweetest poison draught brimful.
Give me thy mouth... thou that art beautiful
With Hell's own beauty, for my heart is filled
With longing strange and strong and unfulfilled :
Give me thy mouth that I may stoop and drink
Grief and the past away, that I may sink
Deep in the drunkenness of love profane :
And if so long as that whene'er again
I thirst, thy lips lie close, the divine " love
That moves the heavens and all the stars " can't move
My lips from thine, lust's lang'rous opiate clings
Upon the breath of all thy kisses... Things
I used to honour, used to love are fled.
But grief is gone and the dread past lies dead,
And so thy lips lie close to meet my need
The whole wide world may rot and I not heed!

Ah! give me dewy kisses, flower scented,
Sin kisses far too sweet to be repented;
And passion kisses... warm and tender clinging,
And soft tear kisses, sweetest sadness bringing.

Until when passion's reign at length be ended
Soft slumber's kisses and thine own are blended.



SORROW

Sorrow, that dark browed lady beautiful,
Loveth me with a strange compelling love.
Two eyes of brown hath she, so deep, so full
Of mystery and longing. She hath wove
Around my soul a web of weird desire,
And I lie in the thrall of her empire.

For sometimes she will nestle 'gainst my breast
And lift her soft sad eyes to mine and gaze
Through all my soul. And sometimes she will rest
Her cheek 'gainst mine so gently. Other days,
With soft voluptuous and impassioned sigh,
She will cling to my lips in ecstasy.

A beautiful blonde girl with gentle smile
And a kind of half promise in her eyes,
Once I pursued. She smiled but all the while
Repulsed my ardent wooing. I prefer
My soul impassioned sorrow girl to her.

For there's a sweetness, a strange ecstasy
In sorrow's kisses passionate that ne'er
Is found in joy's "baisers de butterfly".
I have gazed deep in sorrow's soul and there
I found the love that joy refused to me;
Love such as Christ's that died in agony.



HORROR

World sorrow crept into my soul. I dreamed...
I saw led past me in a cage on wheels
A woman strangely beautiful. She screamed
And wept, and laughed in wildest agony.
Sometimes this horror like a serpent steals
Into my soul and like a coward man
I turn to God and pray. Read, ye that can !





NIGHT FALL

Oh girl! that last kiss like the last long kiss
Of dying day clasped in the arms of night :
Her lips of poppy red cling... cling to his,
With passion fondness warm and then the light
Fades and she dies, and naught remains save this :
That all the flowers breathe into the air
The scented breath of that last passion kiss
And the sweet perfume lingers everywhere
Around... and this a sign and token is.

DAWN

Neath the warm passion kiss of dawning day,
Night fades and dies... his breath is kissed away;
Yet shall he soon revive for that same kiss
Made him immortal as his bien aimée.

Oh girl! listen to what all nature saith;
Love cannot die, for love is life in death, .
We who have kissed in love can never die
For we have breathed of life the very breath.





MUSIC OF RAIN

Night! and the Rain
Falling! Falling!
Music of Pain
Calling! Calling!

Grief and Regret and the Past come thronging,
Weirdest foreboding and wildest longing
And mad despair. Oh the swell and the sweep
Of the song of the storm ! Oh the chords struck deep
By the falling rain ! and it's rhythmic tread,
Heavy with Fate like the march of the dead.

Night! and the Rain
Falling! Falling!
Music of Pain
Calling! Calling!.... Calling !





SOFT BROWN EYES

Oh, Soft Brown Eyes that made me do
A certain honourable thing
That I'd have shirked from but for you,
Oh, soft brown eyes, to you I bring
The laurels, for to you they're due.

Oh, gentle eyes that bravely watch and wait,
Gentle brown eyes that keep a bad man straight.





TRENCHES OF FLANDERS

(Fragment)

Trenches of Flanders
That guard Calais.
Rain sodden, blood sodden,
Shot swept, and shell trodden;
Trenches of Flanders
That bar the way.





YPRES SALIENT

Tempest of iron prepared the advance of a host 'gainst a remnant;
Tempest of shouting announced the advance of that host
overwhelming,
And as the black rocks o'erwhelmed but unvanquished make
stand 'gainst the ocean,
So did that glorious remnant make stand 'gainst that host
overwhelming,
Till the war pride and war lust of that host like the rage of the
ocean,
Broke and recoiled from the wall of their stubborn unyielding
resistance.

How many times, say, when you were a host strong and we
were a remnant,
When you had guns by the thousand and we had to make
war without them,
How many times did you come in your thousands to conquer
that salient,
Only to find there the spirit of Agincourt like a flame storm
fanned
Burning unquenched in the hearts and the souls of that
unvanquished army.

Did ye not know in the heart of your hearts when your orders
were issued,
When you advanced in the pride of your war lust and glittering
harness,

Did ye not know that the men of that little contemptible army
Come of that race that are known as the stubbornest fighters
the world through?

Surely ye knew in the heart of your hearts when your orders
were issued,
When you were told to go right through to Ypres or to die
in the failure,
That you were never the match of that little contemptible army?





ESSAYS

I

THE ALL SOUL

It makes not the slightest difference whether you be Brahman, Buddhist or Moslem, Jew or Christian. You may be either of these, none of these, all of these. Best perhaps to be all of these but still it does not matter. Are you a searcher, a thinker, a dreamer? Is the problem of the universe to you a sweet dream, dreamed and half forgotten and yet half remembered and so... strangely enticing?

In the chaos and darkness of your primitive mind are two flaming torches. The flame of one is red and angry and fitful, now burning low, now leaping heaven high. The other flame is cold and unflinching. The name of the first is Imagination and the second Reason. Let these two flames be wedded and there shall be born that light which is the dawning of truth's day.

Only two solutions present themselves for consideration. First, the conception of a system based on certain laws. Second, the disbelief in system, based on the rejection of any but positive material evidence of system.

Take the latter conclusion; study nature, history,

science; study your own thoughts, feelings, actions, and realise that the law immutable, irrevocable, that governs the universe is the law of cause and effect. There is then a system, but what of the power that drives it? There are two conceptions.

First, that common to western thought of an individual God, himself subject to no law, but a creator of things and a maker of laws to govern those things. This supreme being is, however, not so supreme as to be immune from incessant war with a rival God, the God of evil. His final victory is indeed foretold and his followers are promised the individual ecstasies of an individual heaven which is to be as eternal as the individual hell awarded to his enemies.

Human imagination is unbounded. The hill summits of inspired truth and the ocean depths of intellectual misconception are equally within it's scope. One can understand then that those who can actually conceive an individual God and an individual Heaven and Hell can plunge their imaginations one fathom lower and conceive against all sense of the logical in things, that this individual paradise of theirs may be won or lost in one life. You in whose minds the flames of imagination and reason are wedded, think of this conception, reject it and accept in it's place, the only explanation, the logical one, the inevitable one. Reject the doctrine of individualism. Substitute the doctrine of universalism. That belief; as old as the imagination of man, of an universal, all pervading spirit.

Can you reason? The law that governs the whirlpool that is the universe, is the law of cause and effect.

From the wedding of reason and imagination within you, can you conceive truth? At the utmost centre of the whirlpool that is the universe, is perpetually born, and therefore eternally exists, that power which is life itself and the reason of life. The whirlpool is the soul. At once the soul of the whole universe, and the soul of each individual particle of the world soul. For life is both infinite and eternal. Also life is love. And the centre of the whirlpool that is life is the zenith point of love. And the zenith point of love is complete sacrifice. And this is also the zenith point of courage and wisdom and power which are three other names of love. Where the love which is life reaches it's zenith in the supreme sacrifice, which is the martyrdom of self on the love cross, which is the plunging of the self soul in the ocean of the all soul called Nirvana, there is perpetually and to all eternity born and reborn the love that is life. And as much as the utmost centre of the whirlpool is Heaven, so much are the utmost outer rings Hell.

Yes, love is the reason. Love is both cause and effect, both the universe and the strength that drives it. Love is the reason.

II

THE SELF SOUL

The self soul is a conqueror. Four great captains command his army whose names are Heart, Mind, Strength or Will and Soul.

From the heart comes Passion. Passion of love,

passion of courage. And this beautiful child of the heart is like a Dervish warrior who, inspired by a wild hope, rushes to battle and there dies fighting gloriously and shouting the proclamation of his faith : “ There is no love but heart love and Nature is his prophetess ”.

The Mind bears two weapons forged for conquest whose names are Imagination and Reason. The first is as a sword wielded by a captain of warriors leading to victory; the second is the line of bayonets that follow to push his victory home.

It is Strength or Will that, inspired by Mind, urges Heart to his glorious martyrdom in the cause of Soul.

Soul is just being; universal and individual, but soul consciousness marks a certain stage in the journey back to the all soul, the stage reached by man. Life is the perpetual journey of the self soul back to the all soul.

Watch the moth, how, lured by the mystery of the flame, enchanted as if by a spell, filled by a passionate longing to reach that which his whole being desires, he launches himself on a quest that grows more and more frenzied, till that supreme moment when he pays with a glorious martyrdom the price of victory.

The name of the moth is the self soul and the flame wherein he plunges at the moment of victory is life perpetual and love eternal, and it burns at the very centre of the whirlpool which is the all soul.

Cause and Effect rule life with a rod of iron. And Cause and Effect means evolution and progress. For in spite of the opinion of the disciples of that cheap philosophy, pessimism, our blundering old world is slowly but surely progressing.

Soon perhaps it will be universally understood that all religions are the same, all being equally true, all having the same ideals. The cult of love is the monopoly of no sect and when it is at length realised, that though a man be a Brahman, Christian, Buddhist or Moslem, yet is he his own priest, then it will also be understood that the one and only religion embracing all others is the quest of the soul ideal.

There are two great ideals like two magnets and no man breathes who does not in greater or lesser degree feel their spell. They are the ideals of courage and of love. Both in their zenith mean one thing: sacrifice.

The courage ideal means the losing fight, the spirit that scorns surrender, that glories in martyrdom.

The love ideal means the complete subjection of self in the worship of a beautiful vision of truth seen by sex lovers in the person of the beloved, by world lovers such as Christ and Buddha in the world itself.

Consider the religions of mankind, the beautiful dreams of his idealistic genius. How beautiful they all are. How true. How absolutely the same. And yet for the natural idealist, how unnecessary. For consider this.

The Love Ideal, which is also the ideal of courage, of will power, of wisdom, may be sought and found in the love of a man and a woman. Shall not lovers meet in life throughout the ages, till together they draw near to the Zenith that is Heaven, till together they make the supreme sacrifice, plunging their two self souls that have grown as one in the lake of the all soul that the Buddhists name Nirvana? For here is

perpetually born the love that is life and the reason of life; here is the spell of the whirlpool of the universe, the flame, of which the moths that are the self souls are born and to which they must return. They *must* return.





SHORT STORIES

THE ZENITH

(An image)

The Love

That moves the Sun in Heaven and all the stars.

DANTE.

I am the mouth that is kissed

And the breath in the kiss

The search and the sought and the seeker, the soul and the
body that is.

SWINBURNE.

I

The story of the love of Tony Jackson, violinist, and Lucille Delafontaine, daughter of Pierre Delafontaine, artist in the city of Paris. The old story of Paradise won and lost and regained. How the Zenith was reached and blindly overstepped. How the false step led to the depths of Hell. And how Sorrow alone prepared the way for the remounting of the ladder.

“ Life ”, says the sage, “ is a dream within a dream ”, and the facts of life are the fancies of a dream, but the soul is the world and all that therein is with it's Heaven

above and it's Hell beneath. The soul of a man is a soul within a soul, a world within a world, whose end is in Nirvana, the supreme sacrifice. Here alone the great dream is at length explained, the great ideal at length realised. For here is Love supreme, Courage supreme, and Beauty infinite, and here Jesus and Boudha and Mahomet reap an equal harvest. And they who suffer for the sake of love the agony of the cross, and they of the unconquerable will, who search day and night unceasingly for the wisdom of the Gods, and they who die the hero's death in battle, shall alike find their fulfillment in the sacred Lake. For here is the Zenith of the Ideal. Here is God.

How a man and a maid, hand in hand and heart to heart, found that the road to Heaven led through Hell, it shall be told.

II

“Chère petite amie”, said Tony Jackson as Lucille Delafontaine put down her final cup of tea and they both stood up. “Chère petite amie, all my life I have been in love with the little girl of a dream. Many a night she would come and bend over me and look out of the depths of her big dark eyes that seemed to be always saying, ‘You and I are lovers, Tony, so you must keep straight for my sake’. And when I disobeyed her and went crooked, which was rather often when I first came to the Quartier as a boy, she used to look so sad that I would sometimes lie awake all night

praying her to forgive me. In the day time she used to whisper to me through the strings of my violin, and her low sweet voice is the only inspiration I have ever known. Three months ago to a day, my little dream girl came true. I knew her the instant I saw her. Lucille... ”

“ Tony! ” said Lucille.

And as he drew her to him, “ Tony! Tony! Tony! ” she cried. “ I love you with all my heart. I am your little slave ”.

He drew her closer and closer and bent down and kissed her very gently, very reverently. And that kiss was at once a promise and a fulfillment.

III

Venice! City of beauty and mystery! City of dread repute and strange foreboding! City of lover's dreams!

Ye who have felt and understood the whispers of the great cities, come to Venice by night and ye shall be stirred to the depths of your being.

The gondolieri was singing in a low deep voice as he lazily guided his stately barque down the Gran Canale. Lucille and Tony sat in the stern.

They held hands but they said never a word.

The Gran Canale was the milky way that leads through the realms of Paradise.

At length came dawn, rose hued and triumphant. Like an invincible gladiator he leaped into the arena of

the universe. Like a passionate lover he thrilled all Nature with his burning kisses.

And Tony began to speak to Lucille of all these things. And she hung upon his every word, for she was a tender woman in the thrall of the love-spell and her whole world lay in his eyes.

That Love is the soul of all things, that it is the centre round which the whole wide wheel of eternity revolves, that it is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end and the reason and the explanation, that it is the Paradise of Christ and the Nirvana of Bouddha and the ultimate Heaven of everything that breathes, all these things he told her.

And she knew them to be true. She felt as if she had always known them, but she had never, never heard them told so beautifully.

"Where Love is supreme", he told her, "there courage and wisdom and beauty have reached their Zenith. And they, of whatever nation and creed they be, who search for the Ideal, who follow the banner inscribed "Excelsior" beyond the snows of the mountain crests, they are the advance guard of that great army, that in the end shall take the gates of Heaven by storm.

"And Art", he went on to tell her (for was not he also of the great Brother-hood?), "is the greatest religion of all, for true art is the worship of the Ideal, and true artists are the most fervid lovers of Love".

And so he talked and she listened as one bewitched, till the sun had risen high in the heavens, and the brutal, cynical, rough-mannered everyday world forced

it's rude passage through the gossamer web of the love-dream.

And so they descended into that dream region which is known as reality and returned to their hotel for luncheon.

And when evening came and Nature weary but insatiate turned from the burning passion kisses of her Sun-Lover to the soft, flower scented, strangely enticing kisses of the Night, Lucille and Tony sought their devoted gondolieri and bade him proceed once more to the garden of Paradise. They cared not which road he chose. And so, once more, they glided the whole night long through all the canals of Venice.

This time Tony brought his violin. And the Music God visited the two lovers and he was witness of their love. And they listened to the tale of the passions of all the great worshippers at the shrine of the Music God. Chopin and Beethoven and Mendelssohn and Wagner and all who adored at the altar of melody, whispered their secrets, sighed their love and their despair, through the magic strings of the violin.

It may have been midnight that Tony paused and leant towards Lucille and took her in his arms and sought her lips and laid her fair head on his shoulder.

For a long time he gazed at her lying there, gazed in speechless adoration, then of a sudden inspired, he reached with trembling hands for his violin and began to fashion a wonderful melody.

Strange it was and marvellously stirring. A love song burning now with the warm flame of passion, now with the cool serene flame of love celestial, a hymn, now

to Venus, now to Mary, the mother of God, a triumph march as of a great army marching to victory.

And yet something lacked. Either the measure just failed or the change of sentiment was too violent. It was a glorious inspiration but an incomplete one. Something lacked. Tony knew it for he dropped his violin as suddenly as he had taken it up and bending over Lucille, kissed her long and passionately.

In the depths of his big blue eyes there was a look of sorrow. Not quite despair, yet the fear of failure. And Lucille felt it imparted in her lover's kiss. For she wept softly.

"Do you understand then too, girlie mine?" said Tony.

"I think so", said Lucille, very solemnly, and she looked deep into his eyes.

"But surely it doesn't matter so long as we always love just the same".

IV

It was in Paris in a little "appartement" in the Boulevard Saint-Michel that, nine months later, a beautiful little girl baby was born to Lucille.

Thus the first Zenith or fulfillment of their love was attained and their cup of joy was full. To Tony, Lucille has become as Mary the Madonna, the very incarnation of Ideal Love. To Lucille Tony was a god who walked the earth and ruled her with his eyes. They lived as in a dream, a dream of Heaven.

At such times Heaven is indeed very near. The inspired pilgrim sees already the palaces and towers of the celestial city. But it is at such very moments that the gates of Hell swing back on their smouldering hinges and there is many a devoted pilgrim that walks right in.

Spirit of Night... Blind with thy hair the eyes of day
Kiss her until she be wearied out...

Come soon, soon!

SHELLEY.

V

One year later. A sultry August night. Night is breathless with passion. All day long the Sun Lover has goaded her to frenzy with burning kisses and now she lies, in quivering ecstasy.

And Paris, beautiful, insatiate, adulteress whispered as only she can whisper, and the night breezes carry her message to all her votaries.

“ Life is so short ”, she says, “ Taste the cup of lust while yet you may. Drain it to the dregs. Passing sweet is it while it lasts.

“ Ah ! paresseux enfant ”, she whispers, “ regarde, je suis belle. Look at my eyes that are so soft and filmy. But don't look too long. For eyes breed romance and to-night I am sunk beyond Romance. I want reality. The depths of it. I want rude passion, not graceful fancy. Look at my mouth. My red poppy mouth that curls it's pouting chalice towards you.

Lust's languorous opiate clings upon the breath of all my kisses. Give me thy mouth. I am Venus Astarté. I am passion. I am beauty. Sin kisses shall I give you so sweet that never shall you repent them. Dewy kisses flowerscented and warm passion kisses shall I give you that shall burn your soul from out your body."

The window's of Lucille's bedroom were flung wide open. Lucille lay asleep. Her white bosom lay bathed in moonbeams. Her cheeks were flushed and her beautiful full lips lay parted and outstretched.

Tony lay awake at her side and watched her. Watched her and listened to the whispers of Paris. Every man has his unguarded hours. Hours when the spirit lies in a half slumber and the brute beast lies awake and watchful.

And he looked at Lucille and forgot. Could he have seen her eyes he would have remembered in time. But they were closed and his gaze wandered only from her lips to her bosom and from her bosom to her lips. And as he gazed his spirit quivered with the fear of defeat.

At length, slowly enticed back through the gates of sleep by the magnet of his will, Lucille's eyes gently opened and her gaze met his. She looked deep into the eyes of her God. She read their meaning and she understood.

And at that very moment the star that was mounting the heavens fell. And the gates of Hell swung open wide to receive it. And it plunged into the depths and was lost to view. The Prince of Sin had conquered a double soul. And he set to work to mould

it according to his fashion. And the artist, the Star Gazer, slipped from the path of the Ideal. The Excelsior banner was lost to view as he fell with his fallen star into the depths of the abyss and he was led a quivering captive into the prison of the flesh.

Slowly, but with no more hesitation, for the battle was already lost, Tony drew Lucille towards him. The eyes he sought responded to every thought and gesture of his own; the lips he sought responded to every suggestion of his lips.

And together they fell as together they had risen.

VI

Another year has passed. Another August night is passing. The Sun Lover's kisses have been no less sultry and Nature's love delirium is no less frenzied than last year. On the roof garden of an old, tottering, tall storied house close to the church of the Sacré-Cœur on Montmartre and overlooking all Paris, a party is assembled. The roof garden has been covered with cushions from end to end. A long haired, loose limbed man is leaning against a balustrade at one corner and playing snatches of Debussy and Rimsky Korsakoff on a violin. The guests consist of eight persons, four men and four women. They lie close together but in pairs. Yet it is not for the worship of Venus that they are gathered together, nor yet is this the shame of Bacchus, the rude laughter and loud acclamation of whose votaries may be heard ascending from the neighbouring cabarets.

The God whose feet they kiss has few worshippers, but among those who have once knelt at his altar few indeed forsake him.

They are smoking opium.

Every now and then one of them will raise his flute like pipe to his lips and after inhaling for about twenty seconds will fall back on the soft cushions in an ecstasy of satisfied passion.

Opium breeds lust in some, in others, lazy contentment, in all, utter indifference to the world. Opium lovers are a brotherhood. United in their ruling passion they laugh to scorn ambition, envy and jealousy; which is easy for them, for they feel none of these things. Opium is their God. Lust is merely their slave, their beautiful slave that they use when the fancy takes them. Their senses, cleared by the drug, are far beyond caring for individuality, even in passion. They see things as a whole, and they share the objects of their lust impartially and without jealousy.

Lucille and Tony have passed through the realms of passion and have reached the domains of King Opium. They can fall no farther. They have reached the depths. For Opium brooks no rival and all Hell is at his beck and call.

Tony has just smoked his fiftieth pipe. He sinks back in his ecstasy and pillows his head on the bosom of his neighbour, an Egyptian girl, swarthy as night and strangely and supremely beautiful. She lies in the complete thrall of the opium enchanter, her full bosom rising and falling tumultuously, her big dark eyes in film, her pale, sensuous lips parted and quivering. Pre-

sently she twines snake arms round Tony and clings to him, and soul poison is the draught that he drinks from her lips. And at the same moment the soul of Lucille is launched far on the sea of passion, as she lies : locked in the close embrace of her neighbour slave.

To this depth have Tony and Lucille descended. They can go no further. For here the Spirit of Evil reaches it's Zenith and becomes sublime.

And feeble indeed is the cord that still attaches the soul to the Love Ideal. And dim indeed is the light that was wont to point the path.

For Night the adulteress has sealed with her lips the eyes of the Star Gazer and thrown her dark flowing locks like a mantle over him, so that, drugged by her kisses, he has forgotten all things else.

And she, the pure, chaste maiden, his true love, who shared his ascent, has shared his fall.

VII

It was ten days later, ten whole days later, (for to the votaries of the Opium God, Time has no divisions), that Lucille and Tony staggered weary and drug sodden out of the Temple of Lust, and turned their steps towards home. That home which once was the shrine of a mother's love had now been desecrated and laid bare by the opium invader.

Tony and Lucille thought little of these things as they trudged wearily down the Grands Boulevards and over the Pont-Neuf.

But the awakening was at hand.

Even while that very morning they had still been paying their fervid sacrifices at the Altar of Lust another and a deadlier invader had crossed the threshold.

On the previous evening the old nurse who looked after their baby girl had failed to completely turn off the gas before retiring to rest with her charge. And so it was that Death came and claimed his subjects. In the morning, the concierge, who had occasion to enter the 'appartement' on business, was almost suffocated by the gas. Having turned it off and discovered the two corpses he covered their faces and as no other course seemed open to him, awaited the return of Monsieur and Madame.

And it was to such a home that Tony and Lucille returned that morning. The concierge drew them aside when they entered the hall and attempted to break the news to them. At first, so sodden was Lucille with the drug, she hardly realised what was being told her. Then, as the truth dawned upon her and her brain flashed the message to her heart, she uttered a wild cry and rushed towards the scene of the tragedy. He indeed uttered no sound, but at that moment the flames of Hell seized upon his heart.

When the concierge, who had at first timidly followed them, left them alone with their sorrow, Lucille flung herself across the body of her child and the pent up agony of twelve months sin found expression in a torrent of bitter tears. And as Tony watched, he remembered all that had been between him and his wife and he crucified himself upon the cross of sorrow and shame.

VIII

And for many a day after the two sinful lovers lay in the utter darkness of the bottomless pit. And every day Despair, the worm, burrowed deeper and yet deeper into their hearts, Lucille grew pale as a spectre. Her beautiful big eyes grew haggard, her cheeks grew wan and wasted. And because she spoke no word of reproach to Tony, his cross seemed to him harder even to bear. They dared not look each other in the face, these former lovers, partly from utter shame, partly from the dread of seeing in one another's eyes, the reflection of the horror that kept their own hearts in thrall.

IX

- « Il pleure dans mon cœur
- « Comme il pleut sur la ville. »

VERLAINE.

It had rained all day. Rained ceaselessly, relentlessly. The gutters of the Boulevard were running like mountain torrents, the roofs shed an unceasing avalanche.

And the chords struck by the falling rain struck an answering chord in the hearts of Tony and Lucille as they stood at the big bow window watching the storm.

There is infinite sorrow, divine despair in the song of the rain. Yet for those whose hearts are not dead to sentiment, there is a sweetness hidden in the very depths of this sorrow.

Tony and Lucille watched and listened at the big bow window for many minutes. Then all of a sudden Lucille took Tony's hand in hers (she had not done so since the day of their mutual tragedy three weeks ago), and when he turned towards her looked deep into his eyes. And when she had read them and knew, that as his love equalled her love, so his agony and shame equalled her agony and shame, she fell on her knees before him. And he knelt down beside her and they prayed. And when they had risen, he took her in his arms and kissed her.

And as Love rose triumphant from the tomb, a star that had lain many a weary hour in the agony of the bottomless pit, rose through the gloom, and entered the valley of tears.

X

And as the shades of evening gathered and Paris lay bathed in the soft tear kisses of the Heavens, Lucille ran and sought Tony's violin, and brought it to him and bade him play to her. And as he laid his bow across the chords the Music God took possession of him and he broke into a marvellous melody. And the song that he wrung from the soul of the violin was the song of sorrow. All the hopeless despair, all the black remorse, all the frenzied agony of soul, that had been his and Lucille's, he flung abroad. And as the shadows darkened, and as the rain, as if responsive to his appeal, beat faster and yet faster against the windowpane, the

measure of his music grew more and more frantic, and it's melody wilder and wilder.

Night fell and the hours glided past and still he played.

XI

Lucille listened as though enchanted. She sat motionless on the sofa facing him, her hands clasped tightly together, her lips parted, her eyes gazing into and through and beyond his eyes. And the infinite sadness, the sublime agony of that melody plunged into the depths of her soul, and the ecstasy of her grief was such, that she prayed with all the fervour of her being for Death to come and take her there and then, before sorrow overstepped the bounds of sorrow and entered the realms of madness.

XII

And all at once into the eyes of Tony while Lucille gazed at them, there came where up till now had been written nothing but black Despair, a look of fervid entreaty, as if Hope had suddenly flung the gauntlet into the arena of his soul. And as this look came into his eyes Tony rested his bow on the chords and paused. His lips moved in prayer. "Madonna! Madonna!" he muttered in an impassioned whisper. "Forgive! Forgive!" And his eyes pierced Lucille's eyes.

And the Virgin heard the prayer of these two broken repentant hearts. And she pardoned their weakness. And Tony and Lucille read the message of forgiveness in each other's eyes.

And the God of Music once more took possession of Tony and beneath his impassioned caress, there burst from his violin, the sublime accents of that wonderful melody, that had risen from his soul one night in Venice two years gone. But this time nothing was lacking. The inspiration was complete. The tread of the chords was like the tread of a mighty host marching to Paradise and the melody that ran hand in hand with the chords, was like the triumph song of Love as she leads the soul to the brink of Nirvana.

And when at length Tony ceased and Lucille quivering with gladness ran to meet him, and when he took her in his arms and kissed her pale lips so fervidly and yet so tenderly, Lucille's heart soared in a moment to the Seventh Paradise of Happiness. The Sun Lover, emblem of Love's eventual triumph, leapt into the arena of the Firmament and his first rays lit the little room wherein they stood. And at that moment a star that lay captive in the vale of Sorrow, burst its chains and soared high into the Heavens. For Lucille and Tony Love had dawned never again to set.

XIII

“ A banner with a strange device,
Excelsior, Excelsior ! ”

LONGFELLOW.

Ideal risen from the Dead led the way onward, lighting with his flaming torch the path of Tony and Lucille. Thorns strewed the path and sometimes flowers.

But the sweetest flower of all was a little girl baby that was born to Lucille just ten months after the tragedy that had so nearly wrecked her life and yet had saved it. And Tony followed the torch of the Ideal with that fervour of which only artists are capable. His “ Song of Sorrow ” and his “ Song of Triumph ” produced that same year created a sensation that was not confined to musical circles alone. In a word, he became famous. Yet Fame could not, as she so often does, stifle the Heaven sent gift of genius that was his. For many a year he continued to pour out melody after melody, and his music breathed the spirit of love into many an aching heart.

And when the trumpet of Armageddon sounded and the nations sprang to arms, Tony remembered his duty, and enlisted in the regiment of his home county. And one famous day, the story of whose events made all Britain thrill with pride, the few remnants of a great fighting corps (and Tony among them) followed that Excelsior banner across a space of ground, raked and swept from end to end by enemy machine guns. Tony

fell, shot through the heart, on the parapet of a German trench that he had been the first to reach.

Now when Lucille first received the news of the death of Tony, she wept bitterly and none could comfort her. And black despair clutched at her heart and rent it chord by chord. But afterwards she remembered and was brave. She looked Despair in the face and quelled him. For she knew that the path of duty, which Tony had followed to his death, must be her's too if she wished to rejoin him. So she set out on the path with a brave heart.

And the God that is Love entered her heart and dwelt there so that she was comforted.

And whenever her poor wounded heart aches and feels faint from the cruel blow that she bore so bravely she has but to look into the eyes of a little child and read there the glorious message that Love can never die. And so she waits for the new dawn that, be the night ever so long, can never fail to appear. For she knows that when that new Sun rises they who have lived their lives for love (ay, though they have sinned and suffered for it), and they of whatever creed and nation, who have followed the Excelsior banner beyond the snows of the mountain crests, shall meet again, shall toil and suffer together again, until another stage of the great journey has been passed. Until at length Nirvana is attained. Nirvana, whose blue waters are ablaze in the glory and the brilliance of "that Love that moves the Sun in Heaven and all the stars!"



Photo by Talma, Paris.

CAPT : TEMPLER



THE LOSING FIGHT

‘ And he said, ‘ Fight on ! Fight on ! ’

Though his vessel was all but a wreck [gone
And it chanced that when half of the short summer night was
With a grisly wound to be dressed he had left the deck
When a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead
And himself he was wounded again in the side of the head
And he said, Fight on ! Fight on ! ’

TENNYSON.

I

Don't talk to me about the man with the nerves of steel or the man who will dare any danger. Don't talk to me of the man who, seized with the battle lust, rushes headlong into the fray and dies, pierced by a hundred bayonets. But give me the man who can fight the losing fight. If a game is worth playing, it is worth playing to the end. If a fight is worth fighting, it is worth fighting to the last. And he who can fight the losing fight, he who can meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat those two impostors just the same; he who can fight back at Fortune with both hands, his soul soars swiftly towards the Zenith of the Ideal which is Paradise.

For him a corner of the veil is already lifted.

It is of such a man that I shall tell you.

II

He was a Devonshire lad and went by the name of Harry Thwaytes. I saw him first during a boxing night at the Paris Wonderland. He had come over from England to act as second to his brother, a boxer of no small reputation, who was engaged to fight twenty rounds with an American, by name Jack Macarthy. What the exact cause of the accident was which at the last moment prevented the English champion from putting in an appearance, I cannot remember, but anyway, his younger brother Harry offered to act as substitute. The offer was accepted and in due course the two boys stepped into the ring and shook hands.

Macarthy, tall, dark, symmetrical, with rippling, sinewy muscles, looked the picture of the trained athlete. Harry looked just what he was, a sturdy, well set up lad and a typical Anglo-Saxon. He had none of the finesse of his transatlantic rival.

Macarthy, light footed, eager eyed, danced round the Englishman who had a disconcerting trick of standing stock still. This is a rare thing with boxers. It shows nerves of steel and absolute confidence. Macarthy let loose a sudden left, straight as a dart, and with all the force of his body behind it. This was followed by a series of lightening punches to jaw and heart, which brought a roar of approbation from the eager crowd. It seemed to the uninitiated that the Englishman could not possibly last the round out. But the connoisseurs did not fail to notice an occasio-

nal short, sharp jab, more like a heavy push than a blow, which seemed to be Thwaytes' only retaliation to the terrific onslaught of the Yankee. The men parted as suddenly as they had met. The connoisseurs noted that it was Macarthy who sprang out of reach and that the Britisher had not yielded a foot. There was little time to notice this detail, for in a moment Macarthy had fainted, sprung in low, and commenced an onslaught, if possible even more furious than before. This time Thwaytes' futile looking pushes became more frequent. Their effect also became more visible for Macarthy clinched for safety and uppercut several times from this position.

Thwaytes' hitherto expressionless face began to take on a smile; not a grim fighter's smile; not a sarcastic scornful smile; but one (who will believe me?) of happiness. He was actually happy. He smiled his way through three uppercuts and then advanced. It was no swift counterstroke, deadly on account of the desperate force which propels it. It was like the steady advance of perfectly disciplined infantry, who have withstood the furious charge of cavalry, who have taken without flinching all that the enemy's artillery can give them and who now move forward to complete their triumph, the hostile cavalry routed, the hostile batteries silenced. And strange to say, Macarthy's guns were all but silenced.

Thwaytes' next broadside produced an involuntary grunt of pain from the Yankee. In the clinch which followed he was driven to the ropes and then it was that the accident happened. The Englishman aimed a

terrific right swing at his opponent's jaw, and missing by a hair's breadth, was thrown through the ropes by the impetus of his own effort. His ribs struck the side post with great force and he lay stunned, being only saved from a knock-out by the gong sounding the end of the round. His seconds worked frantically and succeeded in bringing him to his feet just as the next round started. But he was a changed man. A huge blue bruise disfigured his right side and he was obviously groggy. But he was smiling and when he sat down for the next breather the crowd cheered him to the echo.

That match went seventeen rounds. Never since Tom Sayers, with his broken arm, fought the giant Heenan, had a prize fight been fought under such a terrible handicap. For Harry went through that fight with a fractured rib which must have given him agony. Yet he never winced and even to the last his cheerful smile never wore off. Nor was the fight all one sided. For after the sixth round Harry rallied, and by an exhibition of footwork and ring generalship, of which even his greatest admirers did not think him capable, forced the battle and had a long lead on points. In the twelfth round Macarthy ran in under a left lead and in the clinch which followed, landed several telling blows on his opponents damaged side. Harry never showed a sign that he was hurt, but from that moment he tired and Macarthy took the initiative. Concentrating his attention on the ribs of the Englishman, he commenced a furious onslaught. In the fourteenth round Harry was sent to the boards but rose at the count of

nine. Most boxers cover up after a knock-down in order to gain time and to get over a critical period. Not so Harry. When he rose, he stood straight up, and, grinning broadly the whole time, rushed the American and giving him blow for blow, drove him to the ropes and floored him with a right drive to the heart.

Then the gong went and the crowd rose as one man and cheered him such as probably no boxer has been cheered before. In the next round Harry was knocked down three times. The end seemed near. Yet he struggled on. Knowing that defeat was inevitable, yet he fought the losing fight, 'forcing his nerve and heart and sinew to serve his turn long after they were gone'.

But an end must come to all things and when the gong went for the eighteenth round he rose from his chair and stumbled forward on to his face, in a dead swoon. How many of all the crowd of worthy gentlemen who spend their leisure moments writing to the papers and running down an exhibition, they have, in nine cases out of ten never witnessed and who, if they have done so, are too degenerate minded to appreciate it's beauty; how many of these have ever stopped to consider the many virtues which the noblest of all sports is the means of developing. Magnanimity in victory, good humour in defeat, courage, fairplay, mercy, here are a few of the moral lessons that boxing teaches. This is an irrefutable argument which none of the detractors of the noble art have ever been able to overcome.

When Harry came to, he was in his dressing room, surrounded by a sympathetic crowd among whom was his vanquisher. The latter came up to him and shaking him warmly by the hand said, " Gee, sonny! You are some scrapper, sure! I feel real sorry I had to take advantage of your bad rib. Of course I' ll give you first chance of a return match ".

But that return match was never to take place. The fractured rib developed into a permanent injury, and the plucky fighter was obliged to look for some other means of livelihood.

To my dying day I shall never forget that fight. I am not ashamed of saying that in after years, whenever I felt that my burden of sorrow was too heavy for me, I had only to remember the smile on the face of the beaten boxer to take courage and look my troubles in the face. For the example of a brave man is worth more to a man in distress, than the best advice of the very wisest counsellors.

III

Two years later I sauntered into Joy's. If you know the typical Montmartre café you know Joy's. If you don't, well, when I say that there is a Tzigane band in red smoking jackets, and about three square yards of dancing floor, surrounded on three sides by tables and on the fourth side by the bar, you have a fairly good notion of the furniture. The walls when they are not just looking glasses, are adorned with frescoes 'à la

futuriste'. It is a sort of half way house between Bohemia and the outside world, and as such cannot fail to strike a false note in the eyes of the artist.

It is garish, half-hearted, insincere, a Bohemia for worldly consumption only and therefore suitably arranged as such. However, it is a jolly enough place in it's way, if you don't expect an artistic thrill. There are the long haired, velveteen trousered artists of tradition and the poets of the empty stare and emptier purse. There is the young Frenchman of fashion who is sowing his wild oats, the Englishman, sometimes alas, showing a lack of that characteristic phlegm, for which we are so famed on the continent; the American with his broad trousers and broader accent. There are the 'danseuses' and 'modèles' and 'grisettes' and 'artistes lyriques'! And there are society women envious of their Bohemian sisters and envied in turn by them. You hear every tongue of Europe and you drink champagne unless the waiter thinks you are far gone enough to pass off lemonade. Well, that's Joy's.

I walked in there one beautiful May night and stood at the bar sipping a bock and ruminating on the general desperateness of life, when I was suddenly aware of a face that seemed familiar to me. It belonged to one of the violinists of the Tzigane orchestra, a young well made man of medium height. His hair was red, his eyes were of the deepest blue, he had dark eyebrows, a turned up nose, and a strong broad, good-humoured mouth. He was smiling at the moment and to anyone but an acute observer, looked a happy and careless boy. I looked at his eyes, though, and remembered

another occasion when those same eyes had that same look. For it was Harry Thwaytes.

I accosted a man I knew, an artist, by name Roland, and when we had chosen a table and ordered supper, I said to him : " Roland, you to whom the mysteries of the Hill are as the mysteries of the desert to the sphynx, you in fact who know Montmartre upside down, tell me about the boy with the red hair ".

" And it is you, the scoffer, the cynic, the man of matter, who wish me to tell you the old, old story of how a man's heart was broken because of a woman. If, oh cynic turned sentimentalist, you are really curious, well, I am just the man to satisfy you for I have witnessed the beginning of the trouble.

" I have watched it's progress and I have been present at the end. You know my studio in the rue du Bac. About six months ago that red haired violinist, whose name is Harry Thwaytes, took a room above it. So it was that I came to know him and to make a friend of him for a braver boy never stepped. He arrived with a violin, an all but empty purse, and a bitter disappointment.

" He had had pugilistic ambitions, which were shattered by his receiving a permanent injury. Anyway, although he never talked about it, I could see that his disappointment was a great one. It was I that procured him his present post, and it was here that he first met the girl. I expect you know her. Her name is Helène and she was the model for Perrier's ' Bain de Psyché ' which was in last year's Salon. She is quite a little girl, dark and graceful with short curly hair, big dark

eyes with long lashes and an oval face. A perfect picture : an Italian picture. She came in here one night with Dugarry, that brute, who seems to find pleasure in talking to women like a Colonel talks to his regiment on parade. This particular night, he behaved if anything, slightly worse than usual. Harry very quietly stepped up to him and when he attempted violence, knocked him out. While he was lying on the floor, *Helène* came across the room and laying her hands on Harry's arms, looked up into his face with tearstained eyes, and thanked him in a broken voice. Then she went out and Harry told me that night that he had never seen such beautiful eyes in all his life.

"Six months past and I, for one, forgot all about the incident. I thought Harry had too. I saw that he was still bitterly disappointed about the sad end of his pugilistic career and he wanted time to recover. He never showed his disappointment openly. On the contrary everyone who knew him at this time, remarked upon his extreme cheerfulness. A fatalist by nature, he laughed at Fortune's wheel turning and dice throwing. In these bitter days his only real solace was his violin. He turned to it as a man turns to a friend in need. He talked to it in it's own language and it replied to his touch as a woman replies to the touch of her lover's hand. For Harry is an artist to the tips of his fingers. That doesn't mean he is clever or accomplished or intellectual. He is just an artist who loves beauty for beauty's sake without always being able to explain the reason why. Beautiful voices, beautiful movements, beautiful faces appeal to his faculties in a

perfectly natural way. Unlike the average art critic, he has no need to use his brain to appreciate things, which he feels as a man feels the heat of summer or the chill of a frosty day.

“ At first he played things that he knew. Wagner with his grandeurs, his Viking music ; Mozart with his sky piercing, nightingale melodies ; Beethoven which is the music of the soul ; Schumann and Schubert and Mendelssohn which is the music of the heart ; Bizet and Saint-Saëns, Puccini and Rossini and Verdi who appeal to the senses and then, oh, best of all, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky Korsakoff, which is the very Nirvana of the musical art. And as he played he imagined, as only a poor artist who cannot travel, can imagine, the sunny plains of Italy and Spain, the isles of Greece, the blue Mediterranean, the sands of Arabia and Egypt, and the frozen fir forests of the far North. And the music always told him some story. The human pageant passes before his enchanted inner eye, and the artist in him revelled. And so it was that he began to forget his disappointments. He plunged deeper and deeper into the fairyland of musical imagination. He began to improvise, at first without realising what he was doing, and then passionately, with an ever increasing interest. And then it was that he discovered that the cause of his inspiration was the message in the eyes of a little girl, with dark, curly hair, who had once looked up into his face on a certain evening not so very long ago. Well, to cut a long story short, they met again and they loved and Helène came to live in the little room above my studio. You and I have had too many pas-

sionettes' to realise the intensity of that man's love. I tell you he loved her more than you or I have ever loved, and you may believe it or not, as you care. And she was just fascinated by him... sensually. It is not in the nature of women like Helène to love deeply, though I could have sworn at the time that she worshipped him with heart and soul. But however that may be, Helène, obeying some impulse or other in her woman's nature, left him for a man named Saillac. I expect you know him. He is an impressionist artist who is killing himself with opium. Perhaps it was the opium that fascinated Helène. I don't know. There, since you asked for it, is the perfectly banale tragedy of the redhaired violinist. But tell me, do you think he looks the part of the broken-hearted lover? You see the wound is quite recent; it only happened to-day".

I looked up at the man in question and he gave me the impression of a good-natured fellow without a care in the world. Yet Roland assured me that his heart was broken, and Roland never exaggerates on points of that kind. I knew I could take his word for it, and when I had another look at the happy face of the broken-hearted man, as I left Joy's some minutes later, I felt that I had not wasted my evening.

IV

A trench in Flanders. One of those rainsodden, bloodsodden ditches that barred the way to Calais. This particular trench was being held by the Wessex

regiment, when the Bavarian army corps, after forty-eight hours artillery preparation and three gas preparations made their sixteenth mass attack. Fifteen times they came on, their bayonets flashed in the sun and the noise of their wild triumphant shouting rose high above the din of battle. And fifteen times they drew back with their dead and their shame. On the right and on the left the German attack had met with more success and in this way they succeeded in cutting the communications of the gallant regiment who still held their original positions. By this time the Wessex had lost all their officers and both their machine guns. Then came the failure of ammunition and the Bavarians at their sixteenth attempt conquered the position. They found some seven hundred dead and wounded men and two lines of utterly destroyed entrenchments. These they began to reconstruct and at the same time detached a couple of platoons to bomb out a party of about twenty men, who still held a small part of the communication trench. There ensued ten minutes bombing, which is ten minutes Hell let loose. Then came a rush. A horde of wildly cheering grey coated men, with swords drawn and bayonets fixed burst through the smoke and sprang into the trench. Waiting for them was a red-haired corporal, whose right hand grasped a bayonet. The blood was pouring from a gash in his temple, his left arm hung limp and he was as pale as Death, but there was a smile upon his lips.

“Surrender!” rasped out the German lieutenant, revolver in hand “No... surrender!” was the reply,

and as he fell, riddled with bullets; "No: 3 Platoon! Charge!" were the last words of Harry Thwaytes.

How did I get hold of the yarn? Well, it was my regiment that, two hours later, drove the Bavarians out of that same trench at the point of the bayonet. And it was I who picked up a blood bespattered corporal of the Wessex to see if he was dead. His face wore the same quiet smile as on that night, four years previously, when he had fought battling Jack Macarthy for twenty desperate rounds with a fractured rib. His eyes, even in death, had that same look of quiet strength, which had made such a deep impression on me one night in Joy's two years gone. For he died as he had lived, and the manner of his death was told me by an officer who lay by his side, with half a hand grenade in his thigh.

V

Three months later. The summer sun sunk in a flood of crimson and gold behind Mount Kemmel and his last rays illumined the blood-sodden fields of Flanders. Some of his last rays glittered through the chestnut trees that surrounded the cemetery of Bailleul church and shed a soft light on the tombstone of a British soldier. A young girl in the uniform of the "Dames de la Croix-Rouge" was kneeling by the tomb. Her face was buried in her hands and she was weeping softly. A wreath, of fresh lilies lay upon the grave which bore the following inscription:

“ Erected by the officers and men of the Wessex regiment, in memory of Corporal Henry Arthur Thwaytes, who fell mortally wounded on the field of honour under circumstances of exceptional gallantry. He was born at Bideford in Devon in the year 1890. May his soul rest in peace for he fought “ the good fight ”. The girl who was weeping by the tomb was Helène.





EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

March 1918.

B. E. F., France.

“ Soft fervent flower of love that blooms in an enchanted garden ”. That’s what the “ Nocturne ⁽¹⁾ ” says, and love is like the Sun at Dawn, a warrior who with flashing sword and flashing soul hacks his way to victory. And though the evening comes and the grey clouds, his enemies, gather round him and the blood of his wounds tinge the sky, still he never pauses. For the poetry of an idea he dies, he has fought to the finish the losing fight. And it is for this very reason that he shall live again, live for ever. For his life has been beautiful and so intensely, insistingly beautiful that he has become immortal.

April 1918.

B. E. F., France.

When I was locked up in Germany I used to pray for this moment; I used to dream of the romance of war, it’s wild strange poetry crept into my soul; I used to think that the glory of going back to the beautiful adventure was worth any price. And now it’s all come

(1) CHOPIN’S *Nocturne*.

true, just like things happen in fairy tales. I go into my dream country like a baby, eyes wide with wonder, ears strained to catch every note of the magic music I hear there. In my dream country is a piper like Hamelin's piper and I follow him. I follow into his cavern, a spell bound child and I come out at the other end a warrior fully armed, longing for the day that my mettle shall be proved. And often I fail and then I must cross over to the dream country and I must drink romance from the music of the magic piper. And when I come out of the cavern again perhaps this time I win. The romance of war and of love. That is what the music tells me. And I resolve to be a worthy warrior. To fight to the finish, to love to the finish, to sacrifice everything but never honour. And to do all this with no hope of payment, but as a volunteer, just for the beautiful poetry of it all.

April 1918.

B. E. F., France.

It has been raining all day. Soft, persistent rain that sings of the nevermore. Pleads long for the nevermore and weeps softly over a dream's dead ashes.

But rain tears don't bring pain with them, only a sadness that soothes and consoles. That's why I love the rain's song. It takes you to that wonderful faery country that borders on heaven. You can see heaven and you are sad because you can't quite reach there.

*April 1918.**B. E. F., France.*

The guns are playing a tzigane, their wild hearts in leash they beat an even measure at the will of the war wizards. But sometimes they burst their chains and passion rages unrestrained. And then comes the even measure again.

I love the beautiful guns. They are the priests of my faith. All night long they proclaim the truth, for they say: Look Life and Love and Death in the face without flinching and like a flame that springs from a smouldering fire, the world spirit that has power over all things is born in your soul and a sword is placed in your hands by whose magic the whole universe may be subdued.

*May 1st 1918.**B. E. F., France.*

I love extreme moods. Sometimes I love to plunge into the grey dream, to drink in all the wonderful melody that is world sorrow. I feel the primitive animal instinct to howl at the moon. I love the beautiful silvery tears of the world but I love just as much the wonderful orange gold laughter. Someday perhaps a great artist will boldly, brazenly, breathlessly paint a wonderful silvery, golden picture. And they who see shall mount to heaven on a rainbow ladder of laughter and tears. Who flinches from neither, he is invincible.

*May, 8th: 1918**B. E. F., France.*

Once upon a time, it seems years and years ago, I had'nt got much to do and I could spend all day hunting and running down beautiful thoughts across the green fields of dreamland. Perhaps some day that time will come again. I love this life with it's intenseness of feeling, it's sudden thrills, it's challenges. But I love also my other life,... No time for poetry now. But poetry time will come back again,... My dream-world has always been a beautiful shadow world. What a fever of joy it is waiting for the day in the shadows. Day must come. I long for it so. But I want it to be a real June day ⁽¹⁾, an all conquering fearless day, that fears not to love, but loves all it's life and dies loving. Then shall my night be sweet.

(¹) Capt : Templer was killed in action in France on the 4th June of the same year.





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